(c) whether any study has been made on the likely hike in the existing tariffs in agriculture/rural, industry and domestic sectors; and

(d) the impact of the hike on the price index in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Common Minimum National Action Plan (CMNAPP) for Power recommends no sector paying less than 50 per cent of the average cost of the supply, agriculture tariff not being less than 50 paise/kwh to be brought to 50 per cent of the average cost in not more than 3 years.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The impact could be determined only after final implementation of the CMNAPP recommendations by the States.

Power break down in the northern region due to dew drop

1415. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the massive power breakdown in the northern region and the national capital was caused by a tiny dew drop on the 400 KV support insulators as per technical evaluation report of NTPC;

(b) the precautions taken to avoid such incidents causing huge loss to exchequer and inconvenience to the people;

(c) how this "support insulator" was different from other similar insulators installed all over the country, which withstand rain, hailstorms and snow etc.; and

(d) whether the enquiry has shown negligance on the part of maintenance staff as a cause of this accident; if so, the details thereof and the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) to (d) The Committee of Experts' appointed by the Government to enquire into the causes of trippings at Dadri Complex of NTPC has reported that the incident on 20th December, 1996 which resulted in massive power breakdown in the Northern Region was triggered by tripping of the two Inter Connecting Transformers (ICTs), due to flashover on the 400 KV side of the ICTs. The dense fog in Dadri area on the morning of 20th December, 1996, coupled with mist from the cooling tower No. 4 which is in close proximity of the Switch-yard and pollutioin deposit on bus insulators bushing etc., in the yard were collectively responsible for the flashover and subsequent tripping of the two vital ICTs. The Committee also felt that adequate maintenance was lacking and no efforts were made for testing and chemically analysing the pollutants for taking proper preventive measures. The Committee has not fixed the responsibility on any individual but has identified the reasons for the frequent trippings at Dadri Complex Based on the recommendations of the committee. NTPC and Powergrid have been directed to take necessary follow up action.

Short Supply of Power to Small Scale Industries in Gujarat

1416. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that electricity is not supplied for 24 hours to small scale industrial units in rural area of Gujarat;

(b) whether the rural feeder lines in that State are getting power supply for four hour only;

(c) if so, whether Government would give suitable directions to the State Government to supply electricity for 24 hours to SSI units in rural areas; and

(d) what remedial measures Government are taking to save the SSI units in the State because of non-supply of electricity?